

Getting Started



Facilitator's Guide

Getting Started

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Questions

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Please note that the World Wide Web is volatile and constantly changing. The URLs provided in the following references were accurate as of the date of publication.

Purpose of the Module

Community-building activities help students develop a sense of unity so they can work together successfully while appreciating individual differences. A portion of this session focuses on building classroom community among diverse learners.

Electronic communication provides an efficient way to communicate with educators all over the world and also offers educators another way to communicate with the parents of their students. Using various forms of electronic communication and understanding the safety issues that are associated with electronic communication helps educators utilize technology as a communication option.

Expected Outcomes

- A variety of strategies and techniques are used to establish and sustain classroom learning communities.
- Teachers use technology as an option for efficient and effective communication.
- Students and teachers value the establishment of learning communities.

Key Session Activities

Facilitator Note

The session activities that follow are designed to promote the expected outcomes. The activities may be modified to meet the specific needs of different groups.

Essential Question

How is a sense of community established?

Find all online resources in this module at

<http://www.emints.org/xmodres/links/gettingstarted.shtml>

Note: The use of small-group modifications depends on the size of the participant group and the activity listed in the facilitator module. Use a small-group modification only when the activity is not possible with the number of participants in the session.

5 Minutes

Sign-in and Session Starter

Purpose

Opening the session with a short activity that requires some light or fun creative thinking related to the session topic and gives each person an opportunity to speak will help participants transition from pre-session activities and prepare them mentally for active engagement in the session. In addition, once a participant has contributed to the session orally, that person is more likely to engage in subsequent discussions.

Select one of the activities listed below or develop an alternative that will engage all participants and provide an opportunity for everyone to speak.

Wagon Wheel

Have participants number off by ones and twos. Have ones form a circle. Have twos step inside the first circle and form another circle facing out. Ask participants facing each other to introduce themselves with personal information such as names, grade levels taught and the name of an immediate family member (spouse, significant other, parent, or children). In addition, facilitators may ask participants to respond to a statement of their choosing regarding summer activities, hobbies, favorite music or the like. Give participants about 30 seconds for each person to share.

After the first round, have the inside circle move one or more positions to the right or left. Have the new partners introduce themselves as before and discuss a question or statement such as, "What are you looking forward to this school year?" Allow time for each person to share, then have the inside circle move again. The discussion statement for the third round might sound like, "Name an animal that represents how you feel about using computer technology in your classroom. Explain why."

Close by having participants return to their original partners and introduce them to the whole group.

Small-Group Adaptations for Wagon Wheel

Though the size of a group can make the wagon wheel unworkable, participants still need to have an understanding of the wagon wheel as an activity. If time allows, demonstrate the wagon wheel during a classroom visit. After all teachers have had a demonstration of this activity in their classrooms, conduct a discussion concerning the wagon wheel in a subsequent professional-development session. Be sure to touch on the wagon wheel's rules, strategies and advantages for building community.

The following activity will help participants get to know each other better and broaden their communication skills. Participants will each repeat the previous participant's information and then introduce themselves.

Have participants stand in a circle. Let them know they will need to introduce themselves using the names by which they wish to be addressed and personal information, such as the grade they teach or the name of an immediate family member (spouse, significant other, parent, or children). To give the introductions more depth, ask participants to briefly respond to a facilitator prompt. The prompt statement or question should help participants get to know each other better.

Suggested Topics for Facilitator Prompts

- "Describe the most interesting thing you did this summer."
- "Describe a perfect personal day."
- "If my life was a song, it would be _____ because _____."

After the first participant has provided an introduction, have the next participant say, "[Name of Previous Participant] said ... " and then repeat, in paraphrase, the previous participant's information. Then, have that participant do an introduction that the following participant will paraphrase before giving the next introduction. Go around the circle and have participants each repeat the previous introduction and then give their own personal answers. When the last participant has spoken, have the participant that began the activity repeat the last participant's words. After completing

the activity, everyone will have introduced themselves and paraphrased someone else's information. Give participants about 30 seconds for each person to share.

KWL about eMINTS

Display a KWL chart on the SMART Board or chart paper. In a go-round format, ask participants to share one fact they know about eMINTS and any questions they have about becoming eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL teachers.

10 Minutes

Establish Session Goal

Purpose

Formally stating the session goal provides participants with an initial understanding of what the session expectations will be. In addition, it provides time for participants to access prior knowledge on topics that will be covered or pose initial questions related to the topic.

Materials Needed

- SMART Board or chart paper
- Markers

Directions

Establish the session goal by reviewing the purpose and expected outcomes from the module or posing the essential question. If reviewing the purpose and outcomes provide time for participants to write a summarized statement of the session focus on the SMART Board or chart paper. Alternatively, provide time for participants to pose questions related to the session's essential question.

90 Minutes

Building a Sense of Community

Expected Outcome

A variety of strategies and techniques are used to establish and sustain classroom learning communities.

Materials Needed

- SMART Board or chart paper
- Markers
- Materials specific to selected community-building activities (Refer to activities in the participant module and the module resource webpage.)

Participant Guide Sections

Classroom Community: Why Spend Time Establishing a Community? Establishing a Community, Characteristics that Foster Classroom Community, Teacher's Role in Community Building, Common Goal, Operating Norms, Responsibilities, Team Building and Teamwork

Purpose

A classroom community is a place where students feel safe and connected to others. Members of the community share common goals and activities and individuals work together for the common good of the entire group. Starting the school year with community-building activities establishes connections between students that will grow

and develop throughout the school year. In addition, these activities establish a necessary foundation students need to work together on projects using a variety of technology resources.

Use of community-building activities during a professional-development session serves as a model for teachers and develops a sense of connection among participants. The first portion of the following activity establishes the classroom community characteristics that participants will use as guidelines in determining the types of activities they need to use to build their classroom community. Subsequent community-building activities engage participants in building a sense of community within their cohort group and serve as examples for how participants can develop their classroom community.

Directions

- Have participants brainstorm the characteristics of a classroom community. Post responses on the SMART Board or chart paper. If desired, place participants in small groups of three or four to post ideas on chart paper or legal size paper. Some answers might include the following:
 - Caring for each other
 - Respecting each other
 - Working hard
 - Actively learning
 - Working together
 - Getting along
- Review the lists participants created and connect items in those lists to the following general characteristics. Discuss the importance of each category in developing a learning community in the classroom.
 - **Shared sense of purpose or common goal**
Activities that develop a sense of community through positive social interdependence. Working toward a common goal provides vision, direction and cohesion for the members of the community.
 - **Operating norms**
Standards or norms by which that community lives. Classroom norms are patterns of behavior developed by the group and include general norms for classroom behavior and norms for specific procedures.
 - **Responsibilities**
Community members share roles and responsibilities. When establishing a classroom community teachers should consider student roles and responsibilities.
 - **Team Building**
Activities that develop a positive community atmosphere and build connections between students. In addition, team building helps minimize cliques, builds positive social interactions and the feeling of being supported by other members of the community.
 - **Teamwork**
Activities designed to build teamwork and cooperation. These activities can take the form of content or skill mastery or short, fun exercises strictly for the purpose of building trust and cooperation.
 - Model community-building activities that participants can use in their classrooms at the beginning of the school year. The number of activities selected will depend on participant needs and available session time. It

may be advantageous to alternate community-building activities with subsequent session activities. Select at least one community-building activity from the participant module or resource webpage, or develop original activities geared at promoting working together for a common goal, team building and/or teamwork.

Reflection and Putting into Practice

Make connections to classroom practice

Ask participants to discuss the following questions in their small groups or as an entire session: "How might you use activities such as these in your classroom to build community? How important is it to do community-building activities that are fun but not necessarily in the curriculum? What do you feel constitutes a good balance of these types of activities?"

Discuss when to use activities

Point out some appropriate times for community-building activities. For example, doing team-building activities right before a team begins working on a project can help students work together. In addition, participants may need to encourage their students to use good social skills, such as using the correct level of voice and respecting the statements of others without judging. Note for participants working with younger students that they may want to model the correct behavior or ask students how the groups should look and sound during the activity.

Implementation decisions

Ask participants to reflect on their classroom and how they will build classroom community. Provide time for participants to highlight the activities in the participant module that they plan to use in their classroom.

60 Minutes

eMINTS Community

Expected Outcome

Teachers use technology as an option for efficient and effective communication.

Materials Needed

- Participant copy of Year 1 Professional Development Schedule (from website)
- Phone tree
- Paper and markers
- Snack sign-up sheet (optional)
- eMINTS welcome letter (from website)
- Graduate credit information (if available)
- Class visit sign-up sheet

Participant Guide Sections

eMINTS Community: Classroom Visits

Purpose

During this portion of the session participants will determine dates for their professional development sessions and will address additional operational items. These activities support the development of the cohort professional development community and the global eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL teacher community as outlined in

the above list of community characteristics (shared common goal, operating norms and responsibilities).

Directions

- Since previous activities focused on building cohesion and a sense of working together as a community it may be helpful to review the importance of setting community operating norms and responsibilities in the classroom as well as in groups that will operate together over extended periods of time as will occur in their professional development cohort group.
- Provide copies of the **Participant Year 1 Professional Development Schedule**. Set meeting dates for each professional development session. Discuss policies for session cancellation due to inclement weather. Provide a phone tree that will be used for cancellation notification.
 - **Phone Tree**
Create a phone tree to serve as a direct line of communication in the event that a session would require cancellation due to weather or other unforeseen events. Set the tree up prior to the meeting and provide a copy to the participants or gather information during the session to develop the phone tree.
- Establish norms and, if desired, establish who will provide session snacks.
 - **Establishing Norms**
Invite participants to assist in establishing group norms. In some instances it will be beneficial to approach this as an example of how participants might set classroom norms. The norms will provide the group standards for safety, risk-taking, productivity and effectiveness and will set the parameters for developing an effective learning community. Guide participants through the process of establishing group norms. Having participants provide input for the norms will increase participant ownership, leading to more effective group work. Areas to consider when setting norms include the following: environment—smoking, lighting, cell phones, personal needs and time; self—roles, responsibilities and commitment; group—communication, participation, attitudes and support.
 - **Snacks (optional)**
Many teachers arrive at eMINTS professional-development sessions directly after their school days have ended and find it helpful to have a snack prior to starting the session. Discuss the snack needs of the group and the logistics for providing snacks. Some groups have found that having a snack sign-up sheet works well.
- Review procedures as outlined in the eMINTS letter, graduate credit information and any other procedural guidelines unique to specific locations.
 - **eMINTS Welcome Letter**
The module folder includes an introductory letter from Monica Beglau to the participants. Provide copies of the letter to participants, give them time to read it and take time to answer any questions they may have.
 - **Graduate Credit**
Explain the graduate-credit options available to participants. Explain enrollment procedures and course expectations. Provide any documents related to graduate credit to the participants. If graduate credit information is not available when this session occurs, plan to review this information when it becomes available at a later session.

- Discuss the expectations for classroom visits. If desired, provide a handout for classroom-visit expectations. Set up a schedule or start a sign-up sheet for classroom-visit dates and times.

Small-Group Adaptations for Establishing Norms

Follow the same instructions and guidelines as a large group but be aware that norms in a small group can vary from norms in a large group. A small group can have a tendency to be less formal, making it easier for participants to get off task. To assist in this area ask participants how the norms might differ for a small group.

Reflection and Putting into Practice

Following this activity, discuss the importance of establishing group norms, procedures and policies. Ask questions such as: "How might the process of establishing norms as used in the professional-development session be beneficial to students?" "How are strategies such as this important to the development of community in a classroom?" "How do participants plan to address operating norms and responsibilities in their classrooms?"

30 Minutes

Electronic Communication

Expected Outcome

Teachers use technology as an option for efficient and effective communication.

Materials Needed

- Laptops or computers with Internet access
- Chart paper
- Participant module
- SMART Board and projector
- Chart paper
- eMINTS discussion list guidelines
(<http://www.emints.org/resources/lists/guidelines.shtml>)

Participant Guide Sections

eMINTS Community: eMINTS Discussion Lists

Electronic Communication: Asynchronous Communication, Synchronous Communication, Safety, Security and Netiquette

Purpose

Electronic communication enables participants and facilitators to converse quickly and efficiently across distances. Participants should increase their awareness of the different types of communication tools available with technology and how these tools can make communication more effective. This activity covers the various forms of electronic communication systems that will be used by an eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL teacher so participants will be able to effectively use these systems. In addition, participants need to have an awareness of safety and security issues related to electronic communication so they can adhere to and promote safe and secure electronic communication, as applicable, with their students.

Distribution lists offer an efficient method for sending one message to a group of people through e-mail. Sharing ideas within cluster cohorts fosters a sense of

community. The use of a distribution list for each cluster cohort enables participants to share ideas and build community within the cluster cohort.

Directions

- Clarify the difference between synchronous and asynchronous communication by posting two charts—one labeled “synchronous,” the other labeled “asynchronous.”
- Ask participants to turn to a shoulder partner and develop a user-friendly definition of each type of communication. If needed, participants may refer to the participant module or module resource webpage for links to websites for definitions on both types of communication. Write a definition for synchronous and asynchronous communication on the appropriate charts.
- Ask participants to identify different types of electronic communication that fall under each category. The resource webpage includes links to a variety of electronic communication tools. Some participants may be familiar with different forms of electronic communication; others may not. Use the resource webpage as needed to identify examples of each category.
- Provide a brief overview of how different forms of synchronous and asynchronous communication tools function. Alternatively, place participants in teams of two, assign each team a form of electronic communication and have them use the resource webpage to develop a basic understanding of how the communication tool functions. Each team will explain its tool to the entire group.
- In most instances the most effective method for teaching initial use, safety and security of electronic communication is through direct instruction. If needed, assist participants in learning how to send e-mail, send attachments, set up a signature file and create an address book.
- Provide direct instruction on how to use the eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL discussion lists. Refer to the participant module as needed.
- Assess participant readiness for learning how to use additional forms of electronic communication. If participants are ready to learn more about electronic communication, provide direct instruction on how to use additional e-mail features such as a distribution list. In addition, direct instruction may be provided for other forms of electronic communication cohort participants may use, such as instant messaging, threaded discussions or Skype.

Contact Information/Distribution Lists

- Check contact information for participants to ensure that everything is accurate and up to date.
- Give this information to participants so they can set up cohort distribution lists.
- Cover the actual set-up of a distribution list during classroom visits.

Safety and Security Issues

- Introduce the safety and security issues participants should consider as they work with electronic communication, such as spam, spam filtering software, viruses, virus protection software and netiquette when replying to electronic messages.

Reflection and Putting into Practice

Ask questions such as the following: “How might the use of electronic communication enhance communication between home and school? How might electronic communication provide an effective means for providing and accessing information

between colleagues or the eMINTS community? Will electronic communication enhance the sense of community among eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL teachers?"

If needed, point out how having access to a variety of communication tools enhances effective communication. For example, if a student's parent is not readily accessible by phone an asynchronous form of electronic communication such as e-mail may provide a teacher an alternate means of communicating. In addition, highlight how participant access to expert information becomes readily available through the eMINTS or eMINTS4ALL discussion lists.

15 Minutes

Closing

Skill assessment for the next session: Provide each participant with a copy of the appropriate Transforming Learning with Technology Skills handout. Ask participants to complete and return the form. Assure them that their responses will be used to plan the next session and will not be shared with anyone.

Briefly make any announcements and take questions or comments from the group about the session. Review the practice section of the participant module.

Close the session using a go-round activity that encourages transfer of session content to classroom practice. For example, ask participants to each share one idea they will implement in their classrooms.

Session Follow-Up

During a classroom visit after this session try the following:

Classroom Visit with Students

Observe the participant conducting a community-building activity with students. Following the observation, ask the participant to verbally reflect on the value of conducting community-building activities in the classroom.

Classroom Visit without Students

Check the teacher's laptop to ensure it meets current eMINTS specifications. If items are missing, provide the participant with a list of the missing items.

Discuss strategies the participant plans to use to build classroom community.

Make sure the participant is comfortable using e-mail by completing the following activities:

- Ask the participant to demonstrate how to send an e-mail message to the eMINTS facilitator. Make the subject of the e-mail a confirmation of the time and date for the next classroom visit.
- Assist the participant in setting up a distribution list for members of the cohort group. Have the first e-mail the participant sends through the distribution list consist of a short summary of a community-building activity used in the classroom.

Review the process of sending replies to the eMINTS discussion list, emphasizing that clicking the **Reply** button, composing a reply and sending the message posts the message to all members of the discussion list. Guide the participant through the process of acquiring an individual's e-mail address who posts a message to the discussion list. Make sure the participant knows how to get the address and then send a personal response.

Supplemental Activities

30 Minutes

Community Characteristics

Expected Outcome

Students and teachers value the establishment of learning communities.

Materials Needed

- SMART Board or chart paper
- Laptops or computers with Internet access
- Paper and pencils

Participant Guide Sections

Classroom Community: Common Goal, Operating Norms, Responsibilities, Team Building and Teamwork

Purpose

This activity establishes the characteristics of a community of learners. Participants plan the activities and strategies they will implement in their classroom to establish a sense of community among students.

Directions

- Have two or three participants record on the SMART Board or chart paper as participants brainstorm the characteristics of a community of learners. Have the helpers each make separate lists, taking turns recording the responses. When finished, the group should end up with two or three completely different lists.
- Place participants in groups of three or four and give each group a list.
- Each group uses its list to develop strategies and activities for promoting the characteristics on the list in the classroom. Resources given throughout the participant module and on the Resources page may help participants develop strategies.
- Review the five general classroom community categories: Shared sense of purpose or common goal, operating norms, responsibilities, team building and teamwork.
- Have groups create final documents that can be shared with the cohort in which the strategies on their lists are organized based on the five general classroom community categories.
- Each group plans a method for summarizing its work and shares it with the session.

Reflection and Putting into Practice

Provide time for participants to reflect about how the activities identified during this exercise will provide a foundation for a sense of community among students. Ask questions such as the following: "How will the activities identified here prepare students for working collaboratively on projects?" "What benefits will students acquire from participating in community-building activities?" "Which activities will be most beneficial in your classroom?" "When is the best time to implement these types of activities?"

Transforming Learning with Technology Skills (Windows)

Name _____

Please place a checkmark next to skills you know how to complete.

- ☐ View computer system preferences
- ☐ Locate operating system information
- ☐ Locate desktop areas – start button, quick launch icons, system tray
- ☐ Change the start menu view (between “classic” or XP)
- ☐ Change the desktop background
- ☐ Identify icons and shortcuts
- ☐ Create a shortcut
- ☐ Create a folder
- ☐ Use the recycle bin
- ☐ Customize the taskbar (lock/unlock, move, adjust quick launch display)
- ☐ Open the start menu
- ☐ Open programs from the start menu
- ☐ Open start menu features/functions - My recent documents, search, help, run
- ☐ Turn off the computer
- ☐ Open a program help menu
- ☐ Minimize a window
- ☐ Maximize a window
- ☐ Restore a minimized window
- ☐ Close a window
- ☐ Exit a program
- ☐ Copy, cut and paste text
- ☐ Move text
- ☐ Use Save and Save As
- ☐ View various drives (C, D, and so forth)
- ☐ Insert a flash drive
- ☐ Remove a flash drive
- ☐ View files through My Computer
- ☐ View files through Windows Explorer

- ☐ Identify file types
- ☐ Move documents and files through the My Computer window
- ☐ Move documents and files through Windows Explorer
- ☐ Delete a file
- ☐ Change the folder view
- ☐ Search for files
- ☐ Move files to another machine
- ☐ Use Control+Alt+Delete

Transforming Learning with Technology Skills (Mac)

Name _____

Please place a checkmark next to skills you know how to complete.

- ☐ Locate operating system information
- ☐ Locate desktop areas – Apple, Dock, network
- ☐ Change the desktop background
- ☐ Identify an icon/alias
- ☐ Create an alias
- ☐ Check alias to find original program
- ☐ Create a folder
- ☐ Use the trash
- ☐ Customize the Dock
- ☐ Use the menu bar
- ☐ Open programs
- ☐ Access help files
- ☐ Change the display options for the hard drive (list, icons)
- ☐ View different application window options (desktop, applications, documents)
- ☐ Turn off the computer
- ☐ Open a program help menu
- ☐ Close a window
- ☐ Minimize a window
- ☐ Maximize a window
- ☐ Exit a program
- ☐ Copy, cut and paste text
- ☐ Move text
- ☐ Use Save and Save As
- ☐ View contents of various drives
- ☐ Insert a flash drive
- ☐ Remove a flash drive
- ☐ Identify file types
- ☐ Move documents and files

- ☐ Delete a file
- ☐ Search for files
- ☐ Move files to another machine
- ☐ Use Open Apple+Option+Esc

Session Planner

Key Session Activity	Expected Outcome	Time (minutes)	Participant Guide Pages	Corresponding Handouts	Other Materials
Session Starter	None	5	None	None	- Computers with Internet access
Establish Session Goal	None	10	None	None	- SMART Board or chart paper - Markers
Building a Sense of Community	A variety of strategies and techniques are used to establish and sustain classroom learning communities.	90	Contemporary Literacy - Why Spend Time Establishing a Community? (p. 5) - Establishing a Community (p. 6) - Characteristics that Foster Classroom Community (p. 7) - Teacher's Role in Community Building (p. 7) - Common Goal (p. 8) - Operating Norms (p. 9) - Responsibilities (p. 11) - Team Building (p. 12) - Teamwork (p. 14)	None	- SMART Board or chart paper - Markers - Materials specific to selected community building activities (see participant module or resource webpage)
eMINTS Community	Teachers use technology as an option for efficient and effective communication.	60	eMINTS Community - Classroom Visits (p. 17)	None	- Participant copy of Year 1 Professional Development Schedule (from website) - Paper and markers - Phone tree - Snack sign-up sheet (optional) - eMINTS Welcome Letter (from website) - Graduate credit information (if

						available) - Class visit sign-up sheet
Electronic Communication	Teachers use technology as an option for efficient and effective communication.	30	eMINTS Community - eMINTS Discussion Lists (p. 18) Electronic Communication - Asynchronous Communication (p. 19) - Synchronous Communication (p. 23) - Safety (p. 25) - Security (p. 25) - Netiquette (p. 26)	None	None	- Laptops or computers with Internet access - Chart paper - Participant module - SMART Board and projector - Chart paper - eMINTS discussion list guidelines
Closing	None	15		Transforming Learning with Technology Skills handouts	None	
Supplemental Activities	Expected Outcome	Time (minutes)	Participant Guide Pages	Corresponding Handouts	Other Materials	
Community Characteristics	Students and teachers value the establishment of learning communities.	30	Classroom Community - Common Goal (p. 8) - Operating Norms (p. 9) - Responsibilities (p. 11) - Team Building (p. 12) - Teamwork (p. 14)	None	- SMART Board or chart paper - Laptops or computer with Internet access - Paper and pencils	